

**ST JOHN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY, KENILWORTH**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY**

**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2016 AT 7.00PM**

Present: Mr T Martin, Mr D Barrow, Mrs R Augustus, Mrs A Brough, Mrs H Brown, Mrs T Coopey, Mrs B Cordrey, Mrs A Derrick, Miss K Harrison, Mrs S Kettle, Mrs R Killian, Mr D Molyneux and Mr J Whitehouse

In Attendance: Mrs M Baker (Deputy Head), Mrs C Weir (Clerk to Governors)

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Rev A Attwood. No conflicts of interest were declared for the meeting.

**2. APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNORS**

Rev Attwood resigned from his role of co-opted governor and was appointed as an associate governor by the Governing Body. Mr Martin noted that Rev Attwood was a long standing and valued governor and that this was a way of retaining his input and expertise whilst being more compatible with his other commitments.

Mrs Beth Cordrey was appointed to the Governing Body as a co-opted governor. Governors welcomed Mrs Cordrey to the Governing Body.

**3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 24<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2015**

The minutes of the meeting of the Full Governing Body held on the 24<sup>th</sup> November 2015 were approved and signed as a true record.

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**Governor Information Session on Nurture**

Mr Barrow explained that the proposed session would cover 'what is nurture' and 'why nurture is important to our school'. Mr Barrow will email some proposed dates to governors this week, and governors are asked to respond with their availability.

***Action: email possible dates for Governor Information Session on Nurture (Mr Barrow) and respond with availability (All)***

### **Governor Monitoring**

Mr Barrow explained that at least one governor would be assigned to monitor each strand of the Learning Improvement Plan. Mr Barrow proposed the allocation of certain governors to individual strands of the Learning Improvement Plan based on their interests and expertise, and governors agreed this proposal. A number of governors were not allocated to strands of the LIP, and Mr Barrow encouraged them to volunteer to monitor any strand in which they were interested.

## **5. REVIEW OF THE 2015 RAISEONLINE REPORT**

Mr Martin informed governors that he and Mrs Coopey had met with Mr Barrow on the 18<sup>th</sup> January to go through the 2015 RAISEOnline report in detail. Mr Martin explained that the RAISEOnline report compares the school's 2015 results in the national assessment tests (Phonics and SATS) against the national averages. The raw report is lengthy and difficult to digest, therefore St John's pays for an independent analysis of the report by a third party to make it more manageable, and this analysis had been previously circulated to governors.

The independent analysis also suggests a number of questions that governors could ask. Mr Martin and Mrs Coopey had gone through these and other questions with Mr Barrow in their meeting. A summary of this discussion had been circulated to governors. Whilst the questions and answers were not discussed in detail with the full Governing Body, the questions asked by Mr Martin and Mrs Coopey together with Mr Barrow's responses are included below for reference:

- **Are Boys given exciting opportunities to practice their writing in Key Stage One?**

*Yes, the curriculum has been revised heavily to include more writing opportunities for all children. The literacy leader has invested in challenging texts to immerse the children. The whole consortia have had training on mastery, particularly with writing. Many of the strategies have been implemented. Writing is more high profile around the school (evidenced by hall, corridor and classroom displays). In terms of boys specifically, the teachers are very aware of picking texts and themes that will capture the boys' interests. Much is being done to develop writing stamina and confidence. The mechanics of writing are in place, now we are working on imagination and creativity. This is very much still work in progress.*

- **Are the children leaving Early Years Reception Year One ready?**

*More so in July 2015. The good level of development increased from 14% (inadequate) to about national at 72% which is at least good. The new Early Years Phase Leader has taken on board SLT suggestions to get the children to read and write more often.*

- *Guided reading will take place in the Spring term*

- *All children have to complete an independent writing or phonic based activity before going into free flow activities*
- *There is a lot more talk for writing and developing children's creativity and imagination (evidenced by increased profile scores in the area)*

*There are still areas for development but all practitioners are aware of their part to play in raising achievement for all children.*

- **Why do the most able pupils in Key Stage One underachieve in Maths and Writing?**

*The introduction of the new curriculum in September 2014 did reveal gaps in knowledge that need to be filled rapidly. In Maths, the children's recall of number facts (bonds and multiplication tables 2, 5 and 10) are not as rapid as they need to be. The Maths passports are addressing this and are targeting mental maths recall. At least half the year groups are using these effectively. The Maths leader will continue to monitor this.*

*In writing, there were anomalies in the teaching and expectations in the two parallel classes. One was taught by the phase leader and the other by a failing NQT whose expectations were not high enough. Despite extensive evidence produced by the school and an excellent mentor we were governed by Local Authority guidelines and could not terminate the NQT's contract any sooner. The evidence is clear; the class taught by the phase leader had more high achieving children at the end of the year. The other class did not (as confirmed by a local authority moderation which had to be taken over by the Head Teacher when the LA felt they did not have the confidence in the NQT's knowledge to carry on). Consequently, the average of the two classes brought the overall data down.*

- **Are the most able challenged enough in Key Stage Two?**

*Yes, this is continually improving. We are working on differentiation this year from two aspects; the first being that the expectations should be raised and that children are challenged for much of the time. Secondly, we are not putting a ceiling on children's learning by telling the children which activity matches their group, instead we are providing a range of activities that the children can select and will challenge them appropriately. We are finding that children are more readily selecting the "next group up" and exposing themselves to more challenge.*

*Teaching is also a lot more fluid and we are finding that teachers are now confident to identify errors and misconceptions on an on-going basis and also immediately, rather than waiting until the end of the lesson. This enables a distinct flow to the lesson and gives immediate oral feedback at the point of delivery.*

*We now have a strong teaching team. The children at St John's in all year groups now receive consistently good or better teaching.*

- **Are Pupil Progress meetings sufficiently rigorous and hold teachers to account?**

*Absolutely! Governors attend these regularly and have seen the standard and depth of knowledge that all teachers now have about their children.*

- **What is the impact to date of the Rapid Action Plan for writing and the writing initiatives introduced in January 2015?**

*The new initiatives introduced in January 2015 are now being embedded and are starting to come to fruition. The children are now more confident writers and their writing stamina is constantly improving. The Rapid Action Plan action plan for writing has started immediately from January 2016:*

- *Writing non negotiables in every class, used and referred to.*
- *High profile writing around the school*
- *Immersion in quality texts*
- *Consistently high standard of marking*
- *Writing for a range of contexts*
- *Writing for a range of subjects*

*It is worth remembering that reading and writing go hand in hand so therefore it is important that high quality guided reading takes place every day and reading standards do not slip whilst raising standards in writing.*

The independent RAISEOnline analysis also includes some feedback on the school's performance, and this had suggested that the data for some subgroups would be rated as 'requires improvement'. Mr Barrow noted that whilst this was the case, overall each of the elements of the report would be classed as good, and OFSTED would focus on the consolidated data not the performance of individual subgroups. However, he acknowledged that those areas identified in the report as requiring improvement do need to be addressed. The key challenge is writing, and a Rapid Action Plan for Writing has been developed and implemented to address this need. Mr Barrow explained that he will be rewriting the Self Evaluation Form to reflect the RAISEOnline data: this will be circulated to governors when complete and Mr Barrow will cover it in the March meeting of the Full Governing Body within his Head Teacher's report.

Mr Barrow gave his assessment of where the school currently is against the OFSTED inspection categories: Behaviour and Welfare is still outstanding; Effectiveness of Leadership & Management, Quality of Teaching, Learning & Assessment, and Quality of

Early Years Provision are all considered to be good; Outcomes for Children and Learners is considered to be requires improvement; and Overall Effectiveness is felt to be good with the capacity to improve. Mr Barrow explained that the criterion for achieving a good for the Outcomes for Pupils category is very broad, namely 'pupils achieve well'. Based on the fact that St John's has consistently achieved results above the national average, Mr Barrow felt that it could be argued that the school was achieving a good in this category overall.

Mr Martin asked Mr Barrow how the impact of having taken the Deputy and SENDCO out of the classroom should be assessed. Mr Barrow responded that the impact would be assessed in two ways. Firstly, as Mrs Baker and Mrs Eastham are focusing on supporting the lower achieving children, the gap between those lower achieving children and the rest of the pupils should close. Secondly, as Mr Barrow has more time to focus on being the leader of learning in the school, the quality of teaching should improve during the year and the proportion of good or better teaching should increase. There is evidence that this is happening.

Mr Whitehouse asked Mr Barrow whether he and Mrs Baker were still providing cover for teachers, and what impact this was having on their workload. Mr Barrow confirmed that he and Mrs Baker were still providing cover, and that he felt it was positive for the Head and Deputy to be seen in classrooms on a regular basis. So far the impact on their workloads has been manageable. Mrs Baker added that as the cover is timetabled and regular it could be planned around. She commented that there were benefits for the children who were being taught regularly by herself and Mr Barrow, and there was also a positive impact on the morale of staff who could see them leading by example.

Mr Martin asked Mr Barrow what his expectations were for the SATs this July, where he expected the school to be next year when the next OFSTED inspection is due, and how OFSTED would assess the performance data over time given that the new curriculum and assessment framework has been introduced. Mr Barrow explained that the same level of support was been given to this year's Year 6 as was provided for the 2015 cohort, however this cohort is very diverse and there is a two year jump between the old and new curriculum which is resulting in a number of gaps that need to be filled. Taking this into account, Mr Barrow stated that he felt the 2016 Year 6 SATS results would at best be in line with the national average. However, he did expect an improvement in the results for writing compared to the previous year. Mr Barrow noted that the definition of a "coasting" school has not been confirmed, but he would expect that a "coasting school" would be achieving consistently below the national average. Mr Barrow confirmed that a comparison between the 2016 results and historic data would not be possible due to the changes to the curriculum and assessment approach. Mrs Derrick asked whether the introduction of the new curriculum meant that Year 6 are

now effectively working at the previous Year 8 level: Mrs Baker confirmed that this was the case. Mr Martin asked whether Mr Barrow's expectation for the school's next OFSTED would be good with elements of outstanding and Mr Barrow confirmed that this was the case. His expectation would be that Behaviour and Welfare would remain as outstanding, Quality of Teaching, Learning & Assessment would have moved to outstanding and Effectiveness of Leadership & Management would have elements of outstanding.

Mr Whitehouse asked Mr Barrow at what point it would be appropriate for the governing body to look in detail at OFSTED's expectations. Mr Barrow explained that the leadership team would be analysing the OFSTED definitions of outstanding in detail to try to establish what they mean in practice for the school, in particular the statements 'children make rapid progress' and 'children thrive'. Once this piece of work is complete he proposed to discuss it with the Performance and Standards Committee, ideally before the end of the current academic year.

## **6. REVIEW OF ACTIONS FROM THE GOVERNOR SKILLS AUDIT AND WORKSHOP**

Mr Martin asked those governors who were leading on actions that had not yet been completed to give a short update on progress.

### **Communications Strategy (Mrs Killian)**

Mrs Killian explained that the first draft of the communications strategy had been circulated to governors and the feedback received had informed the final draft which was now with Mr Barrow for comment. The communications strategy includes a number of suggestions for improving communications with parents/carers and the community, such as the newsletter being distributed electronically; closure of the school Twitter account and greater use of Facebook; and a revamped school website which will be more user friendly and compatible with mobile devices. Mr Martin congratulated Mrs Killian on producing an excellent plan. Mrs Coopey noted that the strategy recommends greater use of electronic communications, and asked whether all families at the school would be able to access these channels. Mr Barrow replied that he was confident that the vast majority of parents had at least a mobile phone. He noted however that despite a push on behalf of the school, only around half of the current Reception parents had elected to receive communications by email. He stated that if the school goes down the electronic route it would need to do this completely, otherwise it would result in a double administrative burden.

Mr Barrow went on to express some reservations about the use of Facebook, as in the past this has been a source of negative comments about the school. His concerns were around how Facebook could be managed so as to avoid derogatory comments being

posted on the school's page. Mr Whitehouse asked whether the intention was to use Facebook as essentially a bulletin board, or whether a two way dialogue was envisaged. Mrs Killian responded that she felt that it would be a shame if communication was limited to just be from school to parents. Mr Martin suggested that the matter be considered outside the meeting and it was agreed that Mr Barrow, Mrs Killian, Mrs Martin and Mrs Baker would meet to discuss the issues.

***Action: Agree a way forward on the school's use of Facebook (Mr Barrow, Mrs Killian, Mr Martin, Mrs Baker)***

Mr Martin explained that he had cross-referenced the draft communications strategy against the areas that it had been envisaged it would cover during the governors' training course on Engaging with Parents and the Community. He had identified just one item that was not covered in the strategy, namely 'the school runs a helpful programme of events to support parents in helping their children to learn'. Mr Barrow replied that the school did hold a programme of such events, and gave the example of the assessment information session held earlier that evening. He noted that there was the opportunity to develop this programme to cover children's general wellbeing as well as academic matters. This could be included in the induction meetings held for the new Nursery and Reception parents, and could involve the Children's Centre with which the school has maintained excellent links. Mr Martin asked that the programme of events for parents be included as a strand in the communications strategy and that this strand recognises the involvement of the Children's Centre.

***Action: Include the programme of events to help parents to support their children in the Communications Strategy (Mrs Killian)***

Mr Martin noted that there would be a cost associated with implementing the communications strategy. Given the constraints on the school finances, Mr Martin suggested that this could potentially be funded by an increase to the rent charged to the Out of School Club, which has not been reviewed recently and was set at a low level to assist the club when it was struggling financially. Mr Martin asked Mrs Killian to produce a budget for implementing the communications strategy.

***Action: Produce a budget for the implementation of the Communications Strategy (Mrs Killian)***

**Monitoring the effective use and impact of the Sports Funding (Mrs Brough and Miss Harrison)**

Mrs Brough explained that she and Miss Harrison had not met since the last meeting of the Full Governing Body, but both had been working on the action independently. Miss Harrison confirmed that she had now compiled all the information on how the funding

was used, and was due to meet with Mr Barrow shortly to discuss this. It was agreed that Mr Molyneux would assist Mrs Brough and Miss Harrison with the action.

**Ensure that St John's is perceived by the Local Authorities as the preferred school for development in the event that the population of Kenilworth expands (Mr Martin and Mr Whitehouse)**

Mr Martin informed governors that he, Mr Barrow and Mr Whitehouse were due to meet with Gordon O'Dell, Design and Major Projects Manager for Construction Services at Warwickshire County Council, the following day. Mr O'Dell's brief from the Local Authority is that St John's will require an additional classroom from September 2016 and that this would be provided either by converting and refurbishing an existing space at the school or by providing a temporary classroom, with an allocated budget of £150k. A feasibility study will also be conducted to establish how the school could be expanded or adapted to meet the longer term projected needs of the local area.

Mr Martin explained that the possible expansion of the school has both short term and long term implications. The short term question is whether St John's will be required to take an additional Reception class in September 2016. If this is the case, then St John's will have effectively been one and a half class entry for five of the last six years, which is not ideal as the school funding formula is designed for full classes and having small classes puts the school under financial pressure. Mr Barrow has contacted the Local Authority to ask for confirmation that their expectation is for two Reception classes at St John's in 2016/17. Mr Barrow added that he wanted to avoid being in the same situation as 2015, when it was April before the second class was confirmed and then it was a rush to recruit additional staff. Also he is keen to avoid the required building work impacting on the teaching staff over the summer.

Turning to the longer-term, Mr Martin explained that the issue was establishing what would be required for St John's to become a two form entry school. Mr Barrow noted that this would involve two additional classrooms over and above the possible second Reception classroom in 2016. Mr Martin added that there would also be a requirement for nurture facilities, relocation of the car park and other site improvements. Mr Martin believes that the Local Authority is coming to the view that St John's is the best option for expansion in Kenilworth, but the other primary schools will need to be surveyed to confirm this.

Mr Martin went on to explain that it was proposed that the Out of School Club would move into the temporary classroom in the event that a second Reception class is required in September. Mr Barrow explained that the room would double as a nurture room during the day, and it was important that it was a high quality facility with direct access from the school without having to go outside. Mr Barrow is determined that the

Out of School Club remains an integral part of the school as this is one of its key attractions. Mr Molyneux asked what the capacity of the Out of School Club is: Mr Barrow responded that the maximum number of children is usually about thirty but depends on staffing ratios.

**Values Statement (Mrs Killian)**

Mrs Killian reported that she had led two workshops, one with teachers and one with teaching assistants, to establish what the core values of the school are. From these workshops it had been easy to come up with five words that were most commonly mentioned, and these have been sent to Mr Barrow, Mr Martin and Mrs Baker for comment. Nurturing was the most strongly evident value from both groups, with teaching assistants particularly focussing on this. Other themes that came out were Individuals, Ambitious, Friendly and Child-centred. Mr Barrow commented that he had found the meeting that he attended to be very uplifting: it was evident that staff morale was good and staff were proud to be part of the school. Mrs Killian confirmed that all the staff were engaged with the workshops. Mrs Killian undertook to circulate the findings of the workshops to all governors for their comments.

***Action: Circulate outputs from Values workshops to all governors (Mrs Killian)***

**Monitoring of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (Mrs Killian and Rev Attwood)**

Mr Martin confirmed that he had asked Rev Attwood to continue to work with Mrs Killian on the monitoring of SMSC. Mrs Killian confirmed that she would be meeting with Rev Attwood in two weeks' time, and before then she was aiming to speak to Mrs Fenner and Miss Gill who are the members of staff leading on SMSC in school.

***Action: Liaise with Mrs Fenner and Miss Gill to agree how SMSC education should be monitored (Mrs Killian and Rev Attwood)***

**7. REVIEW OF POLICIES**

The list of policies for review during 2015 and those it is proposed should be reviewed in 2016 had been circulated to Governors. Policies on Early Years Foundation Stage, Maths, Calculation and Learning and Quality First Teaching were approved by the Performance and Standards Committee in January. The outstanding policies from 2015 are Assessment, Health & Safety, and Fire & Evacuation. Mrs Baker explained that the Assessment Policy is up to date but will need to be reviewed to reflect the new assessment system, and proposed that this is done at the end of the year in the light of a year's experience of using the system. Mr Barrow confirmed that the Health & Safety and Fire & Evacuation policies have been reviewed in consultation with the Children's

Centre, and the remaining action is for Mr Barrow to meet with Mrs Brough and Mrs Derrick for a final review.

***Action: Complete review of Health & Safety and Fire & Evacuation policies (Mr Barrow, Mrs Brough, Mrs Derrick)***

Governors had been assigned to take the lead on those policies due for review during 2016 with the exception of the Equal Opportunities Policy. Governors were happy with the proposed allocation of policies, and Mr Molyneux volunteered to work on the review of the Equal Opportunities Policy.

## **8. GOVERNOR WEBSITE**

Mrs Brown reminded governors that the main driver for the review of the governor website page was the need to comply with the latest regulations. Mrs Brown explained that she and Mrs Weir had reviewed the content of the website page and had put together a proposal for the revised content, which had been previously circulated to governors. Mrs Brown had also emailed governors to request that they review their personal profiles and advise of any updates required.

It had also become evident during the review that there is a requirement for the Governing Body to have a Code of Conduct for Governors in place. A draft Code of Conduct had been circulated to governors, and Mrs Brown explained that this was essentially the model code produced by the National Association of Governors. Governors approved the adoption of the draft Code of Conduct as presented.

Mr Barrow asked how easy it would be to transfer the updated website page to the proposed new school website. Mrs Killian replied that this should not present an issue, and it was worth proceeding with the review on the existing website. It was agreed that governors would respond with any comments on the proposed website content and update their personal profiles by Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February.

***Action: Respond with comments on website content and updates to personal profiles by Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February (All)***

## **9. COMMITTEE UPDATES**

### **Performance and Standards Committee**

A meeting of the Performance and Standards Committee was held on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and a copy of the minutes had been circulated to Governors. Mrs Coopey reported that the meeting had focused on the performance data as at the end of the Autumn 2015 term. Each of the Phase Leaders had presented the data for their phase, identifying areas of concern and explaining what was being done to address these. Mrs Coopey stated that following the meeting she was satisfied that all the areas of concern

were being addressed. There was also clear evidence of teamwork amongst the staff and a more targeted use of teaching assistants. The meeting also noted that there were some areas of concern in the 2015 RAISEOnline report, and these were discussed in detail by Mr Barrow, Mr Martin and Mrs Coopey in a separate meeting.

Mrs Coopey informed governors that she would like to review the membership of the Performance and Standards Committee and the timing of the meetings. It was noted that Mrs Augustus had been appointed to the Performance and Standards Committee. It was agreed that Mrs Cordrey would also be appointed, and that the membership of the sub-committees would otherwise remain the same. It was also agreed that the Performance and Standards Committee meetings would in future be held during school hours, and that Mrs Weir would investigate a suitable date and time for the April meeting.

***Action: Agree a date and time for the April Performance and Standards Committee meeting (Mrs Weir)***

Mr Whitehouse asked whether the Performance and Standards Committee had explicitly covered the interventions in place for Year 6. Mr Barrow explained that this had been covered and that the interventions would be reviewed at half term to assess their impact.

### **Out of School Club**

Mr Martin presented draft 2015 accounts for the Out of School Club, noting that these were still to be audited. He reported that the Club was still doing well and the financial position was healthy. Mr Martin informed governors that currently the rent paid to the school by the Out of School Club equated to around £16 per day: this covered both the morning session (7.30 to 8.45am) and the afternoon session (3.15 to 6.00pm) and gave the Club access to their room plus other facilities including the ICT suite and the outside areas. The rent is significantly lower than that charged to third party hirers, and Governors agreed that given the strong financial performance of the club it would be appropriate to increase the rent paid to the school to bring it more in line with that charged to external hirers.

Communication had been received from OFSTED regarding the fact that some governors were not registered as Directors of the OOSC on the OFSTED registration. Those governors were asked to complete their enhanced DBS clearance, registration with the DBS update service and submission of an EY2 form to OFSTED as soon as possible. Miss Harrison, Mr Molyneux, Mrs Augustus and Mrs Cordrey were appointed as Directors and Trustees of the St John's Out of School Club. Mrs Weir undertook to provide them with details of what they needed to do to update Companies House, the Charity Commission and OFSTED on their appointment.

***Action: provide new directors/trustees of the OOSC with registration details for Companies House, the Charity Commission and OFSTED (Mrs Weir)***

Mr Martin noted that the Out of School Club Working Group had not met recently, and undertook to arrange a meeting.

***Action: arrange a meeting of the OOSC Working Group (Mr Martin)***

## **10. CORRESPONDENCE**

Mrs Condillac, Children's Services Manager at the Kenilworth Children's Centre, had provided an update for Governors.

## **11. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Full Governing Body will be held on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2016, commencing 7pm at the school.